

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 101180

FOR US DEL LOS

FOLLOWING REPEAT TOKYO 6867 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO SEOUL
TAIPEI HONG KONG PEKING CINCPAC HON HI APR 18, 1978 REPEATED
TO YOU

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 06867

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, ENRG, PINS, CH, KS, JA

SUBJECT: JAPAN-ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING
LEGISLATION

REF: (A) TOKYO 4607, (B) TOKYO 5349, (C) TOKYO 5940,
(D) STATE 98126

1. AS EMBASSY HAS REPORTED EARLIER (REFTELS), KOREAN
CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION, WHICH PASSED
DIET LOWER HOUSE APRIL 7, IS NOW BEFORE UPPER HOUSE
COMMERCE COMMITTEE, WHERE ITS LDP AND DSP SUPPORTERS ARE
EXPECTED TO FACE DIFFICULT BATTLE IN OVERCOMING OPPONENTS'
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OBSTRUCTIONIST TACTICS IN ORDER TO MEET DEADLINE OF
SCHEDULED MAY 17 DIET CONCLUSION. RECENT SINO-JAPANESE
IMBROGLIO OVER SENKAKU ISLANDS, MOREOVER, HAS ADDED COM-
PLICATING FACTOR OF AS YET UNCERTAIN DIMENSIONS.

2. IN RECENT CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, MOFA NE ASIA
DIVISION OFFICIAL WAS CAREFUL TO NOTE THAT SENKAKUS INCI-

DENT HAD NOT YET BEEN FULLY PLAYED OUT AND THAT ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR JAPANESE DOMESTIC POLITICS WERE STILL FAR FROM CLEAR. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THIS DRAMATIC EXAMPLE OF SINO-JAPANESE FRICTION OVER TERRITORIAL DELIMITATION WOULD HAVE UNWELCOME SPILL-OVER INTO DIET DELIBERATIONS ON KOREAN CONTINENTAL SHELF LEGISLATION, PERHAPS CAUSING FURTHER DELAY IN ITS PASSAGE. IN PAST VARIOUS OPPONENTS OF JAPAN-ROK JOINT EXPLOITATION SCHEME HAD WARNED THAT, BECAUSE OF REPEATED CHINESE ASSERTIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY IN SECTIONS OF SHELF AREA, RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF JAPAN-ROK AGREEMENT WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR JAPAN WITH PRC. FOR ITS PART, GOJ HAD BY AND LARGE TAKEN PUBLIC POSITION OF DOWNPLAYING SERIOUSNESS OF CHINESE PROTESTS WHILE QUIETLY, BUT UNSUCCESSFULLY, ATTEMPTING TO INITIATE SOME FORM OF DIALOGUE WITH CHINESE ON ISSUE (AS DURING INFORMAL SINO-JAPANESE LOS BILATERALS IN PEKING LAST JANUARY). MOFA OFFICIAL OBSERVED THAT UNEXPECTED AND AS YET UNEXPLAINED CHINESE MOVES IN SENKAKUS HAD NOW RAISED SPECTER OF SIMILAR CHINESE ACTIONS IN REGARD TO DISPUTED AREAS OF CONTINENTAL SHELF COVERED BY JAPAN-ROK AGREEMENT. (IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION, LOCAL ROK EMBASSY OFFICIAL ESSENTIALLY ECHOED MOFA OFFICIAL'S CONCERNS.)

3. OPPOSITION PARTY DIET MEMBERS HAVE ALREADY MADE THIS LINKAGE BETWEEN SENKAKUS PROBLEM AND SHELF AGREEMENT DURING APRIL 17 UPPER HOUSE INTERPELLATIONS, ELICITING STATEMENT
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FROM MITI MINISTER KOMOTO SUGGESTING THAT GOJ WOULD NOT MOVE FORWARD WITH ACTUAL EXPLOITATION OF SHELF AS LONG AS CHINESE OBJECTIONS WERE OUTSTANDING.

4. COMMENT: WITH 200 CHINESE FISHING BOATS STILL HOVERING JUST OUTSIDE JAPANESE-CLAIMED TERRITORIAL WATERS OFF SENKAKU ISLANDS, IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO JUDGE PRECISELY HOW POLITICAL FALLOUT FROM THIS AFFAIR WILL SHAPE DIET ACTIONS ON KOREAN CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION. WE ARE IN PROCESS OF TOUCHING BASE WITH VARIOUS POLITICIANS AND GOJ OFFICIALS AND HOPE TO HAVE CLEARER READING IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS NOT ONLY OF DIET ATTITUDES BUT ALSO OF DEGREE TO WHICH GOJ WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH LEGISLATION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT OUR EXTREMELY ANXIOUS SOUTH KOREAN DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES ARE ALSO ENGAGED IN A SIMILAR EXERCISE. MANSFIELD
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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